

What is Claimed Is:

1. A circuit breaker comprising:
a case including an opening;
separable contacts housed within said case;
an operating mechanism for opening and closing said separable contacts, said operating mechanism including a pivot and at least one extension spring for moving said operating mechanism to close said separable contacts; and
an operating handle for operating said operating mechanism, said operating handle including a first portion extending through the opening of said case and a second portion within said case, said at least one extension spring extending between said second portion and said pivot.
2. The circuit breaker of Claim 1 wherein said operating mechanism further includes a movable contact arm, a first link and a second link, said first link having a first end and a second end, said first link being pivotally mounted to said pivot at the first end of said first link and being pivotally mounted to said second link at the second end of said first link, said second link having a first end and a second end, said second link being pivotally mounted to the second end of said first link at the first end of said second link and being pivotally mounted to said movable contact arm at the second end of said second link.
3. The circuit breaker of Claim 2 wherein said operating handle has an open position and a closed position, said at least one extension spring being extended as said operating handle moves from the open position toward the closed position thereof, in order to load the first and second links of said operating mechanism; and wherein said separable contacts have a closed position and an open position, said separable contacts including a fixed contact, which is fixed within said case, and a movable contact, which is carried by said movable contact arm.
4. The circuit breaker of Claim 3 wherein said pivot is a first pivot; wherein said operating handle further includes a second pivot between said first and second portions; wherein said operating mechanism further includes a third link having a first end and a second end, said third link being pivotally mounted to said second pivot at the first end of said third link and being pivotally mounted to said first

pivot at the second end of said third link; and wherein said at least one extension spring applies a force to move said third link.

5. The circuit breaker of Claim 1 wherein said separable contacts have a closed position and an open position; wherein said operating mechanism further includes a pair of links having an unbroken state corresponding to the closed position of said separable contacts and a broken state; and wherein one of said links pivots about said pivot.

6. The circuit breaker of Claim 5 wherein said operating mechanism further includes a trip mechanism; wherein said separable contacts further have a tripped open position; and wherein the broken state of said links corresponds to the tripped open position.

7. The circuit breaker of Claim 5 wherein said pivot is a first pivot; wherein said case has a second pivot for said operating handle; and wherein said operating mechanism further includes a third link having a first end pivotally mounted to the second pivot of said case and a second end pivotally mounted to the first pivot of said operating mechanism.

8. The circuit breaker of Claim 7 wherein said operating mechanism further includes a trip mechanism; wherein said separable contacts further have a tripped open position; and wherein the broken state of said links corresponds to the tripped open position.

9. The circuit breaker of Claim 5 wherein said operating handle has an open position corresponding to the open position of said separable contacts, and a closed position corresponding to the closed position of said separable contacts; and wherein said at least one extension spring extends as said operating handle moves from the open position toward the closed position thereof, in order to load the links of said operating mechanism.

10. The circuit breaker of Claim 9 wherein said operating mechanism further includes a movable contact arm; and wherein said separable contacts include a fixed contact, which is fixed within said case, and a movable contact, which is carried by said movable contact arm.

11. The circuit breaker of Claim 10 wherein said operating mechanism further includes a lock maintaining the unbroken state of said links in the

closed position of said separable contacts, said lock responding to said trip mechanism and releasing said links to the broken state thereof.

12. The circuit breaker of Claim 1 wherein said at least one extension spring is a pair of extension springs; and wherein said second portion includes a pair of elongated arms, with each one of said extension springs extending between a corresponding one of said elongated arms and said pivot.

13. The circuit breaker of Claim 12 wherein said operating mechanism further includes a movable contact arm and a linkage, said linkage having a first end and a second end, said linkage being pivotally mounted to said pivot at the first end of said linkage and being pivotally mounted to said movable contact arm at the second end of said linkage, said linkage being positioned between said elongated arms and between said extension springs.

14. The circuit breaker of Claim 9 wherein said one of said links is a first link which pivots about said pivot; wherein another one of said links is a second link; wherein said operating mechanism further includes a movable contact arm, an open position, a snap closed position, a closed position, a flexible cantilever lever fixed within said case, and a third link having a projection, said second link being pivotally mounted to said movable contact arm; wherein said separable contacts include a fixed contact, which is fixed within said case, and a movable contact, which is carried by said movable contact arm; and wherein said flexible cantilever lever engages the projection of said third link and holds said third link in the open position of said operating mechanism, said flexible cantilever lever flexing and releasing the projection of said third link and releasing said third link as said operating handle moves said operating mechanism from the open position to the snap closed position.

15. The circuit breaker of Claim 1 wherein said circuit breaker is a telecommunication circuit breaker.

16. A circuit breaker comprising:
a case including an opening;
separable contacts housed within said case;
an operating mechanism for opening and closing said separable contacts, said operating mechanism including a pivot and two extension springs for moving said operating mechanism to close said separable contacts; and

an operating handle for operating said operating mechanism, said operating handle including a first portion extending through the opening of said case and a second portion within said case, said extension springs extending between said second portion and said pivot.

17. The circuit breaker of Claim 16 wherein said second portion includes a pair of elongated arms, with each one of said extension springs extending between a corresponding one of said elongated arms and said pivot.

18. The circuit breaker of Claim 17 wherein said operating mechanism further includes a movable contact arm and a linkage, said linkage having a first end and a second end, said linkage being pivotally mounted to said pivot at the first end of said linkage and being pivotally mounted to said movable contact arm at the second end of said linkage, said linkage being positioned between said elongated arms and between said extension springs.

19. The circuit breaker of Claim 16 wherein said operating mechanism further includes a movable contact arm, a first link and a second link, said first link having a first end and a second end, said first link being pivotally mounted to said pivot at the first end of said first link and being pivotally mounted to said second link at the second end of said first link, said second link having a first end and a second end, said second link being pivotally mounted to the second end of said first link at the first end of said second link and being pivotally mounted to said movable contact arm at the second end of said second link.

20. The circuit breaker of Claim 19 wherein said operating handle has an open position and a closed position, said extension springs being extended as said operating handle moves from the open position toward the closed position thereof, in order to load the first and second links of said operating mechanism; and wherein said separable contacts have a closed position and an open position, said separable contacts including a fixed contact, which is fixed within said case, and a movable contact, which is carried by said movable contact arm.

21. The circuit breaker of Claim 20 wherein said pivot is a first pivot; wherein said operating handle further includes a second pivot between said first and second portions; wherein said operating mechanism further includes a third link having a first end and a second end, said third link being pivotally mounted to said

second pivot at the first end of said third link and being pivotally mounted to said first pivot at the second end of said third link; and wherein said extension springs apply a force to move said third link.

22. The circuit breaker of Claim 21 wherein said second portion includes a pair of elongated arms, with each one of said extension springs extending between a corresponding one of said elongated arms and said first pivot.